



THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 23.

Price, Five Cents.



"INDIANS DID NOT DO THIS WORK, AND THIS IS THE BODY OF A WOMAN," SAID BUFFALO BILL.—(CHAPTER LII.)



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BUFFALO BILL'S VICTORIES.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER XLV.

THE WOUNDED CHIEF.

A man was riding slowly along over a far western prairie, and the head of his horse was turned toward a distant clump of timber, where he evidently intended seeking shelter for the night, for the sun was nearing the horizon.

The horseman was one to attract attention under any circumstances, for he was a tall, superbly-formed man, young—as he was scarcely over twenty-seven—and he sat on his spirited horse with the air of one reared in the saddle. He was dressed in a fatigue cavalry coat, buckskin leggings, top boots and slouch hat, while his trappings were of the frontier, and he carried a repeating rifle slung at his back, with revolvers and bowie knives in his belt. His face was handsome, strongly marked with daring and resolution, and his hair hung in long wavy masses upon his shoulders. Thus armed, splendidly mounted and a man of determined courage, he would make a deadly foe or a strong ally.

As he reached the timber and rode into it, looking for a good camping place, there came the sudden whirl of an arrow, and it cut through his coat sleeve.

Instantly he was on the alert, a revolver in his hand, and sprang forward to see who was his foe. Reaching an open space, he drew rein, and his weapon was leveled to fire, for there before him was his enemy.

In all his war paint, and the feathers of a chief, an Indian was lying on the ground, a bow clasped in one hand, a knife in the other.

Another instant a bullet from the horseman's revolver would have gone crashing through his brain, but the keen eye of the white man detected, just as the finger was on the trigger, that his foe had fired his last arrow.

Instantly he sprang from his saddle and advanced toward him, his revolver in hand. The chief raised himself upon one hand and held his knife in the other, ready to protect himself.

"Chief, I am not one to kill a wounded man, for I

see you are at my mercy," said the horseman, speaking in the Sioux tongue, as he recognized his foe to be of that tribe.

"The paleface is my foe, but let him fight the Red Panther. He will find him a great brave."

The man looked at the Indian a moment, and then deliberately took off his rifle and belt of arms. Stepping back to where his well-trained horse stood awaiting him, he hung the weapons upon the saddle horn, and walked fearlessly up to the Indian, while he said, in a kindly tone:

"The Red Panther is wounded. I am a warrior of the palefaces, but will care for him."

There was something in the fine face and gentle manner of the speaker that caused the Sioux chief to feel that he was in no danger of his life, and he said:

"Does the medicine chief of the paleface warriors mean that he is my friend, the friend of a Sioux chief?"

"Yes; let me see how the Red Panther is wounded?"

The Indian lowered his knife, and the white man knelt by his side, hastily making an examination of his wounds, for he had two.

"The Red Panther has been in battle?"

"Yes, with the palefaces."

"You have a pistol wound in the fleshy part of your shoulder, and this rifle bullet which struck your leg has broken it," and the man spoke in perfect Sioux.

The chief nodded.

"Come, I will carry you to the spring over in the timber, and see what I can do for you."

He raised the Indian in his arms as he spoke as though he had been a child, and his horse following, he walked rapidly on into the timber, seeming to be well acquainted with the locality.

In a short time he came to a large spring, and, placing his burden on the ground near, he quickly set to work collecting wood for a fire, as night was coming on.

The Sioux chief watched his movements eagerly, saw him build a fire and then make a shelter of

boughs close by, unsaddle his horse and stake him out near.

Then the white man took the chief's blanket and placed it on the leafy mattress he had heaped-up, and, taking from his saddle a case of instruments and some bottles of medicine, he threw off his coat and went to work.

The wound in the shoulder was first looked after, and it was inflamed and swollen; but the skillful hand quickly extracted the bullet, and it was dressed as tenderly as though the Indian had been a friend, and not one of the worst foes of the whites along the border.

Then the leg was looked after, and the bone was found to be shattered below the knee. It was a long time before this wound was dressed, and the pain to the Indian was excruciating; but at last it was over and the limb properly cared for and bandaged.

"It will be a long time before you can walk, chief; but how did you get these wounds?" said the horseman.

"The Red Panther knows well the great paleface scout, the mighty Indian killer of the palefaces, and he sought to find him. He had with him many braves, and was on the trail of the paleface scout, when he met the white warriors by night, and we were forced to fly across the prairie.

"The Panther was wounded, but his pony brought him to this timber two suns ago."

"Ah, you were on my trail when you met the troopers?"

"Well, I'll forgive you, as you are in bad luck; but if you have been two days without food, you must be hungry, so I will cook supper," and the scout at once set about it.

The Indian ate ravenously, and soon after the scout put out the fire and laid down to rest.

He was up at dawn, however, and a short hunt on the prairie revealed the chief's pony, and he was quickly caught and brought up to the little camp.

The wounds were then once again dressed, break-

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fast was cooked, and then, cutting down two long, slender saplings, the scout made a *travois*.

This he hitched to the Indian pony with a harness made of a lariat, and, with his stake line, he made a network for the wounded Indian to rest upon.

Placing him upon it as comfortably as he could, he started away over the prairie, the pony following behind his horse.

"Where scout chief go?" asked Red Panther.

"To your village," was the cool reply.

"Does not the white chief fear my braves will kill him?"

"No, the Red Panther will not let them do that," and the scout added to himself:

"This is just my chance to find out where the village of the old scamp is, and how many braves he can put in the field."

"The white chief is a great brave," said the Indian.

All day long the scout kept on the march, stopping only for a short rest at noon, and at nightfall he camped on the banks of a small stream.

The wounds of the Indian were again looked to, a good supper was given him, and the scout lay down to sleep with the air of a man who knows no fear.

CHAPTER XLVI.

FACING HIS FOE.

When morning again dawned, the scout placed the Sioux chief upon the *travois* as comfortably as he could arrange him, and once more set out for the Indian village.

At noon, when a short halt was made, Red Panther said:

"The white chief not go to Sioux village."

"Why not?"

"My young men kill him."

"No, I'll trust the Red Panther."

"White chief kill many Sioux braves."

"Yes."

"Have many scalps."

"Well, I never kill unless I have to do so, Red Panther."

"White chief make Sioux squaw tremble, Sioux papoose cry."

"He brave man to go to Sioux village, for all know him there as great Sioux killer."

"See here, Red Panther, if I had not found you as I did you would have died."

"I am not much of a medicine man, but I have got your wounds in good shape, and I would not harm you while you cannot protect yourself."

"I am taking you to your people, and if any of your young men wish to follow me to get my scalp let them come, for I will be ready for them, and when you get well, if you wish to go on the war-path again, why, come along."

"But now you must tell your young men that I am your brother, and they must do me no harm while I am in your village."

The words of the scout impressed the Sioux chief greatly.

He had no desire to take the trail to the happy hunting grounds yet awhile, and he understood that what the white man had done for him was more than his own best medicine men could do.

He would, therefore, make him welcome to the village and protect him, so he said:

"The white chief shall be the brother of the Red Panther."

"He is welcome to the village of the Sioux."

"My young men shall not harm him, and the squaws will remember him as the friend of the Red Panther."

"But there is war between the palefaces and the red men."

"The palefaces kill my people and drive us away from the graves of our fathers."

"The Sioux cannot forget, and they will not forgive."

"When the mighty white chief, the great Sioux killer, leaves the homes of my people, he shall again be my foe, and my young men will hunt for his scalp; but not until he has gone for one sun away from their village."

"The Red Panther will so tell his many braves."

"They will obey him.

"Let the great white chief go with the Red Panther to his village."

The scout had triumphed; he was to enter the Indian village under the protection of the great head chief, Red Panther.

He could hardly hide his look of gratification from the keen eyes of the Indian.

So once more the trail was resumed to the Indian village.

After being an hour on the way, the scout, who had raised his handkerchief upon a stick, saw an Indian horseman ahead.

He acquainted Red Panther with the fact, and the latter, still lying on his bed between the two saplings placed on each side of the pony and the ends dragging behind, forming an easy resting-place, gave a loud call.

It was heard by the horseman, who turned and rode back into the timber.

Soon he reappeared with half a dozen other mounted braves.

The chief, Red Panther, repeated his call, following it with a few words in Sioux.

Instantly the call was answered and the red horseman showed no sign of fear.

He halted and, pointing to the wounded chief, called out in the Sioux tongue:

"The chief, Red Panther, is wounded.

"His paleface brother, Pa-e-has-ka, has brought him to his people."

The red horsemen repeated the name in chorus:

"Pa-e-has-ka!"

They seemed dismayed as they uttered the name.

They gazed upon the scout with a certain awe mingled with admiration.

"Pa-e-has-ka!" they repeated.

"Yes, the great white Buffalo killer, the mighty paleface chief, Buffalo Bill," called out the Red Panther.

"Buffalo Bill!"

The Indian horsemen repeated the border name of the great scout.

They all knew him by name, if not by sight, but too well.

They knew him as a terror to the Sioux tribe.

The scout held out his hand, and said in Sioux:

"Wash-te," which is a friendly greeting.

The Indians took it as a show of peace, and each one grasped the extended hand.

The Red Panther then looked as though glad that his young men so received the scout.

Then, in a few words, he told the story of how Buffalo Bill had found him, and though he had fired upon the scout, he refused to kill him and had treated him as a red brother.

The red horsemen looked on approvingly.

Then the Red Panther told two of the braves to ride to the village and tell his people that he was coming, brought back wounded by the mighty Pa-e-has-ka, who had saved his life, to tell his people that the chief Red Panther said there must be a welcome for the great white scout though he had been known as their foe, the killer of many Sioux braves.

Away darted the two messengers at the utmost speed of their ponies, while once more the scout moved on, leading the chief's pony.

Some of the young warriors rode ahead, some behind, and so they went on to the village.

The sounds of rejoicing in the village over the coming of Red Panther, believed to be dead, was heard while the scout and his party were yet some distance off.

Songs were heard, tom-toms were beaten, shouts arose, and yet Buffalo Bill knew, as they came in sight of the village, that there was a certain restraint, that the joy was subdued by the coming of one who had been their foe.

As the crowds—hundreds of warriors, squaws and children—gathered to welcome the chief, the scout felt that every eye was upon him.

In the looks of the braves was defiance, while the squaws looked their hatred, and the children hung back in awe.

But Buffalo Bill never faltered, his face never changed color in the midst of thousands of cruel foes.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE WHITE MAN AGAINST THE RED MAN.

Buffalo Bill's wonderful nerve was the admiration of the Indian warriors.

Nerve in danger and in suffering is what delights the redskin heart.

The scout had it to a wonderful degree.

There he was in the very midst of thousands who would treasure his scalp above all things.

Many a brave was there who would have given his good right arm for the scalp of William F. Cody.

Then there were not a few who would have died to get it, if only to live in the war songs of the tribe as the slayer of the great scout, Buffalo Bill, who had killed so many of their braves.

He had come into their village, bringing with him their great chief, Red Panther.

He had not killed their wounded chief when he could have done so, but instead became a brother to him.

It was not according to the Indian method of war, but, having done so, a council of the chiefs, after a talk with Red Panther, decided that the white chief should not be a foe until he had left their village and gone many miles upon the trail back to the fort.

The scout was given a large tepee all to himself, and the best robes were placed there, while the wives of Red Panther were told to prepare his meals for him, of the choicest food—choicest from a redskin's point of view.

But Buffalo Bill could stand it.

The medicine men of the tribe flocked around the Red Panther to "doctor" his wounds; but the chief preferred to have the scout continue as he had begun, and cure them.

Not to offend his own medicine men, the cunning old chief told them that he feared he would make the scout angry if he did not allow him to look after his

wounds; but after he had left the village they should have a chance.

But Red Panther was doing so well under the scout's treatment, for Cody was really a good surgeon from the experience he had had, that the chief was determined to keep him at the village until he was so well that his medicine men would not be needed to torture him, for Indian surgery is very crude, to say the best of it.

Wishing to get a good idea of the number of fighting men the village could turn out, Buffalo Bill, after dressing the wounds of Red Panther the morning after his arrival, suggested that they should have a grand shooting match, with rifles, revolvers and bows and arrows.

Also a riding match and other sports to show what the young men of the Sioux could do.

The old chief was glad to show how great his warriors were, and he was caught with the idea, and appointed a day a week from that one.

Buffalo Bill suggested that the time was long, as he must return to his own people.

But Red Panther told him that his men were not all there, for a few were on the warpath, others hunting game, some scouting, and he would have to send runners after them to bring them in.

As Buffalo Bill was anxious to see all and also to have those who were on the warpath and scouting taken off from that work, he consented to the delay.

At once the chief Red Panther picked out a dozen of his best runners and started them off after the absent braves.

As it was known that Buffalo Bill had said that he would join in the games, all in the camp were anxious to have the affair a great one.

The very best shots with rifle and revolver were picked out among the champion warriors.

Also the best shots with bow and arrows, the most expert riders, wrestlers, runners and jumpers; and all were determined to show the great white chief that he was not the equal of their best crack braves in anything they should undertake.

To the surprise of the Indians the scout said that

he was willing to go into the lists for each and every sport, and they were much pleased to have him; for what could a white man do against them when it was man to man?

The braves selected for the games at once began to practice for the coming affair, and Buffalo Bill did not allow his own muscles to grow tender from his rest.

The third day after the departure of the runners the bands began to drop in, and, counting them as they came, Buffalo Bill found that there had been several hundred away from the village.

"Well, this leaves the plains free from them for a while, at least," muttered the scout, when, on the sixth day, the last runner came in with his party.

Old Red Panther was so improved that he could go on a crutch the scout had made for him, while his shoulder was nearly healed, though his arm was still kept in a sling.

On the day of the games, Buffalo Bill scanned the gathered redskins, who were all crowded into a large, open meadow, and he made a rapid and cautious count of them.

"All of five thousand in the village, and that means fifteen hundred fighting men, with a reserve of old braves and boys of five hundred more to leave in the village.

"Well, I have found out just what I wanted to know.

"Then they have all of four thousand ponies, and this village is well located to defend and hard to reach."

Having accomplished this much of his purpose, Buffalo Bill turned to watch the games.

These began with running, wrestling and jumping matches among the scrubs.

Next followed the same games among the score of champions.

When his turn came to match the champions, Buffalo Bill threw aside his hunting coat and weapons, his hat, and changed his top boots for a pair of mocassins he had bought from an Indian girl.

From boyhood the scout could always run like a

racehorse, and he distanced three put against him, so that the best runner in the village was brought forward.

It was an even match from beginning to end.

Again a heat was run, but with the same result.

In jumping the scout made another tie match with the Indian champion; but it caused surprise that he was not at once beaten.

In wrestling it was an unequal contest, for Buffalo Bill was the victor without an effort, so great was his strength.

When the riding contest was begun a bucking broncho was given to the scout, an animal that was a perfect devil.

But Buffalo Bill was then in his element, and he rode the broncho with perfect ease.

As not an Indian in the village could ride the horse, for they are not the match of the American cowboys in horsemanship, the scout was a victor.

Then he showed the redskins how he could pick up things from the ground at full speed, and many other tricks they did not dream of.

This closed the first day's fun, and Buffalo Bill was regarded with more awe than before.

The next day was the one for the shooting contests.

From his tenth year, Buffalo Bill had been a crack shot with bow and arrow, and it was now seen that he had lost none of his skill.

In fact, Buffalo Bill had kept his hand in all the time, not knowing when he might have to turn to the bow and arrow, and on several occasions he had saved his life with these redskin weapons.

He surprised the Indians greatly, and his shots were as near the dead-center as those made by their best marksmen.

The revolver was next tried, and in its use the Indian champions were no match for the white man.

He simply sent every bullet to dead-center.

With the rifle the Indian champions were better shots, and yet the scout proved a dead shot, for he made no misses, and the crack of all the redskin shots could not say this.

Thus the games ended with the white man the victor over the red men.

The Indians had to acknowledge that they were beaten, and by their foe.

It increased their awe of Buffalo Bill, but it also increased their hatred for him.

They feared him more, but Buffalo Bill took his honors most modestly, not following the Indian custom of boasting.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE DOOM OF THE TRAITORS.

Having accomplished his purpose in going to the Sioux village—the discovery of its strength of position and numbers of fighting men—Buffalo Bill was anxious to return to the fort.

He had not expected to be gone but a few days when he left, and his time had stretched out to two weeks.

He was afraid the colonel commanding would send out a large searching party for him, and thus bring trouble.

The Indians seemed to have this fear also, as they sent out several bands of warriors soon after the games were over.

Of these, Buffalo Bill knew that he must be watchful when he did leave.

He had taught the Indians to dread him more than ever, and all would be anxious to kill him once he got away from the limit of the protecting circle Red Panther had drawn around him, as his friend and guest for the time being.

Of course, in going to the Indian village, Buffalo Bill had also acted from a sense of mercy, of strong humanity.

He was not one to leave the Indian chief to die for want of a helping hand, and he had so acted toward him from a good-hearted desire to serve him in his distress.

This done, he was ready to fight him, and they were on equal terms again.

It would have been a great thing for Buffalo Bill to take old Red Panther a prisoner to the fort.

He had found him in a fair way to die if he did not receive help, and so he had done as his heart dictated, and at the same time he had gained much desired information by it.

But on the trail home he must look out.

The Indians that had already left the village were all between him and the fort.

They were on the watch for him beyond doubt.

He must be ready to face the danger.

It was the second day after the games that Buffalo Bill dressed the wounds of the chief for the last time.

"The Red Panther will get well fast now, though he must not use his leg or his arm for some time.

"He is all right, and Pa-e-has-ka must go back to his people.

"The great chief, Red Panther, has been good to his paleface brother, and Pa-e-has-ka will not forget him.

"Some day the palefaces and the red men will be brothers and live together in peace.

"But as long as the red men take the warpath, the paleface warriors of the Great Father in the land of the rising sun will be on their path.

"The paleface scout must go now; he will say good-by to the Red Panther, and his ears are open when the great chief of the Sioux wishes to have a peace talk."

So said Buffalo Bill.

The chief, Red Panther, replied that his people were not to blame, for the warriors of the Great Father came to drive them from the lands of their fathers, then came the "wheel tepees," with people to build homes on their hunting grounds, and they were to be driven further and further toward the land of the setting sun.

The old chief did not recognize that barbarism must give place to civilization, and that by refusing to adopt the methods of the palefaces, they, the Indians, were bringing ruin down upon their race.

They loved wild life and war too well to yield to paleface methods of killing to cure.

Buffalo Bill then bade the Red Panther good-by,

and said that he would at once remount his horse and start on his trail.

He did not ask to be protected, or for word to be sent to guard him until he got beyond the Indian country.

The chief tried to get him to remain longer, but, finding that he was determined to go, he bade him farewell, after ordering a pack-horse to be loaded with Indian tanned furs, robes, buckskins, provisions and many other presents.

The chief also sent word to his head warriors that the great White Chief was going to return to his people, and ordering that no brave should leave the village until he should have gone half a sun (half a day's travel) upon his way.

The scout then thanked the chief, gave him an extra revolver he had with him, and told him that he would leave, five suns after that day, at the spot where he had found him, a pack animal with paleface food, pipes, tobacco, blankets and other presents for him, if he would send a brave there to get them.

Buffalo Bill knew but too well the Indian's idea of giving presents and anxiety to receive them.

Then they parted, and the scout, mounting his well-rested horse, and leading the pack animal, started upon the trail to the fort before noon of that day.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE THREATENED AMBUSH.

The scout was well aware that he must be on the alert against some young buck who was thirsting for his scalp, and if he got it would get forgiveness for disobeying the orders of his chief.

He therefore did not take the regular trail, for fear of an ambush, but flanked around miles to the left.

Still, he was cautious, and kept a bright lookout well ahead.

To aid him he used the powerful field glasses he never went without.

These glasses enabled him to examine closely coverts miles ahead, and helped him to discover two

Indians he could never have seen with the naked eye.

They had evidently discovered that he had changed his trail, and were cutting across to head him off at a given point, where he must go through a pass in the mountains.

"So that's their game, is it?" said the scout, and he at once began a wide flank movement.

It took him over half a dozen miles out of his way, but then life was at stake, and that distance was nothing.

He managed to strike the foothills miles below, and made up along the stream until the mountain pass was but half a mile away.

Then he halted and staked his horses out in a good hiding-place.

He drew off his boots and put on his moccasins, cast aside his hunting jacket and started on foot.

He made his way to the gap, to get behind the warriors he was sure were lying in ambush for him.

Quietly, cautiously, he went, as though in no hurry, and at last came to the trail leading to the gap.

So he made his way back along the trail toward the Indian village.

He had gone about a mile when he came to a little meadow.

Near its center was a large rock, with a few scrub trees growing about it.

"Here is my game," muttered the scout.

He pointed to where two Indians were crouching in hiding.

Had he followed the direct trail from the village it would have led him within fifty feet of the two warriors.

"I could go on through the pass and avoid them, but I'll risk it, for it will help me still more," he said, and he began to walk toward the ambushed redskins, his rifle across his arm and ready, for did they look behind them he would be seen crossing the open meadow-land.

An Indian is patient and long suffering.

These two were no exception, for they were in no hurry.

They could afford to wait for their game.

Perhaps one was asleep, the other negligent.

At any rate, the scout got within a hundred yards of them unseen.

They lay right behind the rock, to one approaching from the village.

One was looking around it to catch sight of the expected scout, and he had pulled up a bunch of grass to conceal his head.

Buffalo Bill stood attentively regarding them for a moment.

He knew that night was near at hand and he could not afford to wait too long.

The first the two Indian warriors, traitors to the orders of their chief, Red Panther, knew of danger was the ringing war cry of the scout.

They knew it but too well. They leaped to their feet and were really disconcerted.

Their intention was to hunt cover.

But a shot, and one of them went down.

The other had hastily raised his rifle to fire.

His rifle and that of Buffalo Bill flashed together, the reports sounding as one.

Again the White Chief proved his prowess as a dead shot.

The Indian's bullet cut through his sombrero, and his bullet entered the brain of the redskin.

Buffalo Bill had seen but two through his telescope.

Yet he was cautious. He approached with his revolver on his arm, his finger on the trigger.

The two redskins were dead, or, that is, as nearly dead as an Indian is who has not been scalped.

Buffalo Bill felt that it was his duty to scalp those two Indians and leave a sign so that Chief Red Panther would know the doom of the traitors; that he had killed the men who sought to kill him.

He did so, and then he looked for their ponies, found them, mounted one, led the other, and rode back to where he had left his horses.

Not caring to risk other ambushes, and knowing

that his trail would be full of hidden dangers from those who had left the village, he left the regular trail and made a wide flank movement to reach the fort from the other side.

He went on until nightfall, then camped, built a fire, had his supper, and, with his own horse and the three Indian ponies near him, went to sleep.

He was taking big chances, but no one knew it better than he, and was more careful in guarding against surprise.

CHAPTER L.

THE SCOUT'S RETURN.

There was no more popular man in the army than Scout Buffalo Bill, and he was the idol of Fort Platte, where he was stationed at this time.

As a scout Buffalo Bill was superior to all, and many a time he had gone off alone on a most dangerous trail, and always returned with valuable information for the commandant of the fort.

As days had gone by and Buffalo Bill did not return from his last scout, the greatest anxiety was felt by one and all for his safety, and a party of cavalry was preparing to go in search of him, for the Sioux were on the warpath and committing the most inhuman barbarities all along the border, for I write of more than thirty years ago.

Suddenly across the prairies from the fort a horseman was seen approaching, and a great shout went up from the soldiers, as the form of their chief of scouts was recognized.

He had been gone for over two weeks, and was certainly supposed to be dead.

But he rode into the fort with a pleasant face, showing no hard usage, and, giving his horses to the care of the orderly, went at once to the head quarters of the colonel commanding the fort.

It was evident that the scout had something important to communicate.

"Why, Cody, I am delighted to see you back, for, fearing harm to you, I had ordered Captain Taylor to take his company on a scout to look you up,"

said Colonel Royal, as he grasped the hand of the scout.

"I hope my second in command of the scouts has well supplied my place, colonel, for I have been unable to return, for I have been in Red Panther's village."

"Ha! a prisoner to that arch, red fiend, and escaped alive?"

"I was not a prisoner, sir."

"Not a prisoner, and yet in his village?"

"I was his guest," was the smiling reply.

"I am all in the dark, Cody."

"Well, sir, while on my scout, after leaving the fort two weeks ago, I came upon Red Panther lying wounded in the Blue Spring timber, and he made his presence known by sending an arrow through my sleeve here.

"I was about to kill him, when I discovered that he had fired his last arrow, looked scarcely able to move, and was in hard luck.

"I put aside my weapons, examined him, and found two wounds, one having shattered the bone of his leg; and he told me he had been following my trail and run upon a party of soldiers, barely escaping with his life in the darkness.

"I doctored him up, and the next day it struck me that I had a chance to find out just what you wanted to know, where the village of Red Panther was and how many braves he has."

"By the gods of war, Cody, but you went to that redskin's village?"

"Yes, sir. I rigged up a *travois*, and carried him to the bosom of his family," said the scout, with a light laugh.

"You are as reckless as the devil, Cody, about your own life, and that is saying a good deal."

"I thought I was pretty safe under the circumstances, and so it proved."

"You went to the village, then?"

"Yes, sir, and it was a surprise party for the redskins to see me ride in with their wounded chief."

"I should think so."

"I gave them the peace signs, and old Panther told them what I had done.

"They treated me as they might a pet rattlesnake, but did not harm me.

"I stayed ten days in the village, doctored Red Panther daily, and got all the points I wanted for you, sir."

"Good! but tell me all."

"He has about five thousand people in his string of mountain villages, and can defend them with fifteen hundred warriors, while, besides those he can put on the warpath, he has fully five hundred old men and boys as a reserve.

"His villages are in the Red Ridge country, and he is well supplied with arms, stolen horses and cattle, and has half a dozen captive women and children there, and among them a beautiful girl of eighteen, who has been a prisoner for five years, but they were hidden from me."

"The fiends!" indignantly said the colonel.

"The girl and captives were not allowed to speak to me, but I managed to write a few notes to the former, and she is treated as a kind of queen, for all look up to her; but to free them I was utterly unable."

"He has a much larger force than I supposed; but go on with your story."

"As it was, when I left there two young braves thought they would like my scalp, and they ambushed me colonel."

"With what result?"

"Here are their scalps," and the scout quietly threw the red trophies upon the table before the colonel, who remarked:

"You simply saved your scalp and got theirs, eh?"

"Yes, sir; for the girl told me to be on the watch for those who would follow me, and I waited for them, and picked those two up with my glass."

"Ah, Cody; few men could do what you do. But I am delighted to see you back, and the information which you bring is most valuable. But here are some letters for you," and the colonel handed

the scout a package of letters, and, soon after going to the seclusion of his own quarters, Buffalo Bill sat down to peruse them.

CHAPTER LI.

A STRANGE LETTER.

As he read one of the letters, the face of the brave scout became dark and stern, and he said sternly:

"By Heaven! But I shall save her from him, and he shall end on the hangman's rope, if I can catch him."

Then again he read the letter, which was as follows:

ST LOUIS, July 5th, 18—.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND CODY:

I write to you in the direst distress, for I know not to whom else to turn, who can aid me as your brave heart and willing hands can do.

I do not call upon you now because I saved your life once from an assassin's bullet, and asking you to repay the debt, but because I need your aid, and feel that it will be willingly granted.

I went West, as you are aware, five years ago, to better my fortunes, and the fate of my daughter Lulu you well know—that she was stolen by the Indians and afterward slain.

The shock was so severe upon her mother that I was forced to leave the West and return to our old home here, where I found that my father's bachelor brother had died and left me his heir to a very large fortune, remembering also my twin daughters, Lulu and Florence, by a handsome heritage, for he did not know the former was dead.

Florence grew up to beautiful womanhood; and a year ago there came to St. Louis a young man whom we had known in the West, but whom I deemed a somewhat wild and reckless fellow.

He met me, said he had made a fortune in cattle and become a good citizen, and I invited him to my home.

Alas! poor Florence loved him, for when a girl she liked him. They corresponded when he returned to the West, and three months ago he came back to St. Louis and they were married.

I paid over to him her legacy in cash, along with a handsome sum to invest for me in cattle, and they went to the frontier to his home.

But, my dear Cody, a letter now comes from her, which her mother first opened, and, ah! what a story of horror it tells to her.

She writes that her husband, whose name is Kenton King, was already a married man, and, worse still, he had no cattle ranch, but is the leader of a band of road agents and outlaws, who are known on the border as the Masked Marauders.

For all these years her husband has been the leader of this band, and it was to his outlaw retreat that he took poor, unfortunate Florence, who learned from one of his men that he had married before, and his first wife still lived.

This man, bribed by her, promised to send me the letter which she wrote, telling me the awful truth.

She further said that she would endeavor to escape, but to do so was almost impossible.

Now her mother is very ill under the shock, and I cannot leave her, so I write to you, knowing that you will do all in your power to rescue my child and bring that villain Kenton King, to his just punishment, for you cannot be very far from the trail that he haunts.

Telegraph me, if you can act, from some post near, that you undertake the work for me, and I will rest content, and joy will come to the hearts of a stricken mother and father.

Save my poor child, my dear Cody, and Heaven will ever bless you as you deserve. Ever your friend, DUNCAN ALLEN.

CHAPTER LII.

THE SCOUT'S DISCOVERY.

The letter from Duncan Allen, a man to whom he owed his life, impressed William Cody most deeply. He sat for a long time musing, and then glanced over his other letters.

Having done so, he arose and once more sought the quarters of Colonel Royal.

The colonel noticed the stern look upon the face of the scouting officer, and said, quickly:

"Any bad news, Scout Cody?"

"Yes, sir, for a friend of mine is in distress. Some years ago, when in St. Louis, I saved an intoxicated friend from the grasp of some low gamblers, who meant to fleece him.

"They vowed vengeance upon me; and one night I was struck down by an unseen foe, who sprang upon me to drive his knife to my heart.

"Ere he could do this, there came a pistol shot from across the street, and my assailant fell upon me, badly wounded.

"The one who fired the shot was a gentleman who lived opposite, and had been seated at the open window, in the darkened room, smoking.

"He saw the blow given me from behind, and, springing to the mantel, grasped a revolver he kept there, and fired at my assailant.

"I was taken to his house and tenderly cared for, as the blow had been a severe one, while my assailant was taken to prison, where I visited him, to find that he was one of the gamblers who had sworn to kill me.

"He soon after escaped, and, owing my life to the act of Mr. Duncan Allen, I never forgot him.

"My friend came West, and you remember the circumstance of five years ago, how the Indians raided his home and carried off one of his daughters?"

"Yes; Duncan Allen. I recall the name and circumstances now, fully."

"Well, sir, this letter will explain how he is again made to suffer."

As he spoke, Scout Cody placed the letter he had received in the hands of Colonel Royal, who read it through carefully, and said sternly:

"This is infamous."

"Yes, colonel, and this leader of the Masked Marauders should be run to earth."

"He certainly should be, for he has caused us a great deal of trouble. But how to capture the scamp and his mauraunders is the question."

Buffalo Bill, after a moment of thought, said:

"Colonel, I will act as scout if you will allow Captain Taylor to take his company and go with me in search of this Masked Marauder chief."

"I will gladly do so, Cody, but when will you start?"

"Within two hours, sir, for the sooner the better."

"All right, Cody; I will issue the order, but are you not tired out after your long ride?"

"Oh, no, sir; and I will ride a fresh horse, and I hope to bring you the Masked Marauder band as prisoners."

"I notice that Allen's letter was written a month ago, and his daughter's to him must have been several weeks before that, so I am anxious to get off, and I would like to send a scout to the nearest telegraph station with a message."

"Certainly, one shall go at once, for I am heart and hand with you in this matter, Cody," was the reply of Colonel Royal.

Half an hour later a mounted scout rode off, carrying a telegram to the nearest station to send to Duncan Allen; and soon after Scout Cody left the fort, accompanied by Captain Alf Taylor and three-score of his gallant troopers.

That night they encamped about fifteen miles distant from the fort, and the following morning Buffalo Bill, with several cavalrymen, departed on ahead before the start of the main company, as he was anxious to discover if there were any signs of Indians on the warpath along the trail he intended to follow.

He had ridden but a few miles when a horseman was seen ahead, and he was watching them attentively.

He was seen to be in uniform, was well mounted, carried a rifle slung at his back, and as they drew nearer was observed to be rather a striking-looking personage.

He had a handsome, reckless face, and awaited their coming up to him with the air of one who felt that he was to meet friends.

His uniform bore no insignia of rank upon it, though he appeared like an officer in his look and general makeup. He saluted Scout Cody, and, as they drew rein, asked politely:

"Is this a detachment from Fort Platte, sir?"

"Yes, sir; but, though a soldier, you are not from the fort," answered Buffalo Bill.

"No, sir. I belong to the Third Cavalry, stationed at Fort Lyon, sir, and got separated from a scouting party several days ago, and was trying to make Fort Platte when I saw you coming."

"Well, my man, we are now on our way to a vicinity not so very far from Fort Lyon, so if you wish to return with us you can; but I think I have seen you before."

"Yes, sir; and your face is familiar."

"I have seen the Third Cavalry often, and it was doubtless there; but you are fortunate not to have met with any redskins, alone as you are."

"Yes, sir; I have been fortunate, and I am glad to have met with you, sir," and the man dropped back behind the scout, with a salute.

Toward evening, as Buffalo Bill was riding along, his troopers and the strange horseman straggling along behind him, and stretched out for some distance, his eyes suddenly fell upon a sight that

seemed to startle him, as he rode over a rise of prairie.

He had been pressing his horses over considerable ground that day, examining the prairies and timber as they rode along, and the animals were pretty well fagged, so they were all going in a slow walk, as they were to camp before long, and the company under Captain Taylor would soon be up with them.

What he saw caused him to dig his spurs into his tired horse, and go forward at a run.

The strange soldier and the troopers also saw what the eyes of the scout had fallen on, and they also urged their horses forward. It was a spectacle such as few men could gaze upon unmoved.

There, scattered about on the prairie, within a few rods of each other, were seven human forms. The forms were picked of some of the flesh, and were but partly covered with uniforms, and there were numerous arrows sticking in the skeleton bodies and also lying about in the grass.

It was a sickening sight, and the bodies clearly showed that the victims of the massacre had not been very many days dead.

Riding up to one of the bodies, Buffalo Bill sprang to the ground, the troopers who had arrived with him doing likewise, while the stranger remained seated upon his horse, seemingly deeply moved by the sight.

"There has been foul play here," said the scout, sternly, while his eyes flashed fire.

"Yes, sir; the redskins have done fearful work, indeed," said the cavalryman who had joined them upon the prairie.

Buffalo Bill strode to the side of one of the forms.

"Indians did not do this work, for these arrows were placed here, not fired, and this is the body of a woman!" said Buffalo Bill.

"A woman!" gasped the stranger, while the other soldiers stood aghast at the horror of the spectacle.

"Yes, as I can tell at a glance, and I feel sure that white men have done this fiendish work, and, to

make it appear as Indian work, have stuck these arrows here."

"But would these arrows have remained while the wolves were tearing the flesh from their bones?"

"No; this is the deed of men as cruel as any redskins, and I vow before Heaven I will hunt down this mystery to the bitter end!"

CHAPTER LIII.

THE MASKED MARAUDERS.

The words of the famous scout, or, as he was often called, the King of the Border, made an impression upon his hearers, and all stood in silence about him.

Those who knew him well were well aware that he was not a man to make an idle vow.

That he had read the signs before them truly, the older frontiersmen among the troopers realized, and, as the company was now coming over the hill at a gallop, all awaited its arrival in silence.

That Captain Taylor and his men were also horrified at the sight that met their vision was evident, and when Scout Buffalo Bill told his idea of the affair, the young commander accepted it as the truth, for William Cody was known to be second to no man in reading signs, and as a scout and in his knowledge of prairie craft he had no equal all knew.

"What is to be done, Bill?" asked Captain Taylor.

"Bury these dead at once," was the reply.

"You are sure one is the form of a woman?"

"Oh, yes, for if you doubt it, look here, captain," and he held up a lock of red golden hair, fully four feet in length.

"True, also; too true; but in Heaven's name, who was she? Who were her comrades, Bill? I cannot tell, but are they the bones of men?"

"Yes."

"And you are sure Indians did not have a hand in it?"

"Certainly, sir; perfectly sure."

"Well, I will have my men bury the dead."

"And place this form in a separate grave, sir," said the scout, alluding to the mangled form he had said was that of a woman.

"All right," and the order was given.

While the troopers were burying the dead—digging the graves, one large one, one small one, with their knives—Buffalo Bill went carefully around the spot in a circle.

All knew that he was looking for a trail.

Suddenly he came upon a trail, and he stooped down and examined it carefully. At last he started off over the prairie on foot, calling to Captain Taylor to follow when ready.

The captain himself did so at once, leaving a lieutenant to follow with the company.

"Well, Bill, what is it?"

"I've struck a big trail here, as you see, and I think it was made by those whose bones lie back yonder, and those who pursued them to their death.

"See, sir, the pursuers retreated the way they came, and, more, their tracks carry out my idea that they were white men who did the work, for their horses are shod."

"You are right; but what white men can they be?"

"The cutthroat band of outlaws known as the Masked Marauders."

"By Jupiter, but you are right."

"I almost feel that I am."

"Who is that strange trooper you picked up, Bill?"

"One of the Third Cavalry from Fort Lyon, who got adrift from a scouting party, he says. He's a handsome fellow, sir, isn't he?"

"He is, indeed; but I don't like his face."

"Nor I, Captain Taylor, and somewhere I have met him before, though where I cannot tell."

The troopers now came up, and half an hour later they all went into camp on the banks of a small stream, where there was plenty of good grass and water.

Nothing disturbed their slumbers, and they started at sunrise the following morning, and had ridden

some miles before it was discovered that the strange horseman was not along.

To the question as to his whereabouts, no one could answer. He had not been seen since going into camp the night before, the scout supposing he was messing with some of the men.

"I don't half like that fellow leaving as he did," said Scout Cody to the captain, as they rode along.

"Nor I, for his movements smack of mystery; but we ought to reach the vicinity of the Masked Marauders to-night."

"Yes; but see, there is a trail fresher than we have been following, and made by a single horse. Ten to one it is that of the strange trooper."

"But why should he go on ahead, scout?"

"By Heaven! I know that fellow now!" suddenly cried Buffalo Bill, excitedly.

"You do?"

"Yes, sir; he is a man who attempted to assassinate me years ago in St. Louis, when Duncan Allen, whose letter you read, saved my life."

"I will wager a year's pay he is one of the Masked Marauders, for they go in all sorts of disguises; and, if so, he knows our destination," said the captain.

"Call the men, Captain Taylor, to come on, for we must overtake that fellow, or get to his camp soon after he does, if he is what I believe him to be."

The scout was in deadly earnest, and the troopers pressed on at a steady and rapid canter. They stopped for a half-hour only at midday, and during the afternoon the horses were not spared.

The men had been told what the stranger was supposed to be, and they were as anxious as their officers to overtake him.

His trail led along with the one of a dozen horses which they had followed from the spot where the half-devoured forms had been found.

The night fell just as the troopers rode into the hills, but the trail was before them, and, with a lantern in hand, the untiring scout followed it on foot, all the troopers walking, to rest their tired horses. Suddenly the scout halted, and thrust his lantern out of sight. To his keen ears had come the neighing

of a horse, and far ahead was the glimmering of a camp-fire. It was up a cañon a quarter of a mile away.

"We have them!" He said the words quietly, and mounting, the order was given to form in fours for a charge. The scout and Captain Taylor led the advance, and, after riding some distance, there was a camp visible ahead of half-a-dozen fires. Horses and men were seen, and there was evidently some excitement in camp.

Then, in the voice of Captain Taylor, came the order:

"Charge!"

The troopers swept down upon the camp like an avalanche, for all now saw the black-masked faces of the marauders, and knew that the scout had led them right.

The Masked Marauders were hastily preparing to leave camp, for pack-horses were upon all sides, and the men were saddling their riding animals; but the charging of the troopers was a surprise. Quickly they opened fire with their revolvers.

Then the soldiers and the marauders met, and the fight was fiercely fought and quickly won.

"Where is your chief?" asked Buffalo Bill of one of the half-dozen prisoners that had been taken.

"He cut through your ranks and escaped," was the reply.

"Describe him."

"A tall man, with black curling hair, a dark brown mustache, and dressed in top boots, corduroy pants and a hunting jacket; but he reached camp dressed in a cavalry uniform."

"I see; but his horse?"

"A handsome bay."

"When did he reach camp?"

"Three hours ago."

"He was dressed then in uniform?"

"In uniform, yes, sir."

"Ah! and you were about to leave camp?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why?"

"He told us that soldiers under Scout Buffalo Bill were coming to attack us."

"He was our man, Captain Taylor, beyond a shadow of doubt," and the scout turned to the captain, who replied:

"Without a doubt, as you say, Scout Bill."

"Is this all of your band?" the scout asked the outlaw.

"The dead you see, and the prisoners, also; all excepting the captain."

"What is his name?"

"Captain Kenton, we call him."

"Where has he gone?"

"I do not know."

"He had a captive here in your camp."

"You mean his wife?"

"Yes."

"She is gone."

"Where?"

"She bribed some of the men to let her escape, and took them with her one night."

"How long ago?"

"Ten days."

"How many men went with her?"

"Six."

"Ah! and they escaped?"

"I guess so."

"My man, your gang are going to prison, or will hang, one or the other, and if you wish to save your life, tell the truth."

"If you lie to me you go to the fort with your comrades; but if you will tell the truth I will set you free to-morrow. Come here."

He led the man apart and beckoned Captain Taylor to come also.

"Your captain pursued his wife, came up with her party, a fight followed, she was killed and also the others, or else massacred."

"Is it not so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Were you with that party?"

"No, sir; and I tell you frankly the men who were

CHAPTER LIV.

BUFFALO BILL'S SECRET PLOT.

are dead, for you killed the very ones in your charge upon our camp."

"It is lucky for them, if you tell the truth; but we will not press that.

"Now, tell me how the captain came to kill his wife."

"They say her party was overtaken and showed fight, and she was accidentally shot."

"Then the captain killed the others, and left them there for the wolves?"

"Yes, sir."

"And then?"

"I suggested to him when he came back that he should have left marks to appear as though Indians had done the work, and he started back alone to do so, and dressed in army uniform, and carrying arrows with him.

"He only returned to-night."

"Well, you have secured your life in part; but tell me where I will find your chief?"

"I think he has gone, sir, toward Denver."

"All right; in the morning I will strike his trail with your aid, and then you can go free. Captain Taylor, I will go on alone from here, so that you can return to the fort; but I wish you would kindly take up the bones of that poor woman, and have them buried at the fort, while you will write her father for me, telling him all, and that I am on the trail of her murderer."

The troops went into camp in the cañon, in the cabins of the Masked Marauders, and the next morning started on their return to the fort, loaded down with booty, and carrying with them a number of stolen horses found with the outlaws.

But Buffalo Bill found the trail of the Masked Marauder captain, and followed it alone, for he kept his word to the outlaw and allowed him to go free.

Though Buffalo Bill had released the outlaw after gaining from him certain information more or less valuable to him, it was with a secret motive he kept to himself.

Before the man departed, he had a very decided conversation with him, the scout asking:

"Is your chief allied with the Indians?"

"You bet he ain't, fer thar is war between them," was the answer.

"And why?"

"Well, ther cap'n might have had peace with the chief, Red Panther, as they were both on the same game of killin' and robbin' honest men, but ther chief were so fond o' ther murderin' himself he couldn't keep his hands off ther reds, an' ther result were ther Indians was his game ter lay low jist fer ther fun of it."

"I see, and you think he has gone to Denver?"

"Yas, fer without a gang he couldn't stay here, an', as his wife is dead, he has nothin' ter do only he turns honest, or goes ter gambling."

"Has he not saved money in plenty?"

"He's got his share, an' it's ther lion's, too, put away somewhar."

"Where?"

"That's what I'd like to know, fer yer kin bet I'd finger some of it."

"And you do not think the chief killed his wife intentionally?"

"No, I don't, fer he loved her a heap; but when she escaped an' he an' them with him come upon her an' them as was helpin' her ter escape, they fired on ther men, an' she got a bullet by accident, is my way o' thinkin'.

"Yer see, they was dressed up like soldiers, she wearin' a uniform, too, for ther cap'n had all kinds o' disguises in his outfit, an' when they fired on ther party ther men forgot about ther woman. Thar was no man in ther layout who did not like her a heap, she were so good, so sweet, an' so kind.

"I tell yer, ther cap'n will miss her, an' it's good he does."

"And now, if I let you go what will you do?"

"I'll light out quick fer other parts, an' be glad I got away."

"And go to murdering and robbing again?"

"Yer bet I won't, fer I is done, arter ther close call I has had."

"And you are wise, for a close call it certainly was with you."

"I knows it, for I guesses yer intends ter hang them of ther band as yer has captured."

"They certainly will be strung up when they reach the fort and are tried."

"They better had been shot in ther fight."

"Well, you were the lucky one, and I warn you to live a different life, for you have money hidden away, I am sure, and ill-gotten though it was, you can use it to live on, and try to be honest in the future."

"Pard Cody, I'll take your advice, fer we all knows how squar a man you is, an' ther band was more afraid of you findin' us than we was o' ther soldiers."

"I'll do as you say, git out, an' if yer sees me agin yer'll find me a honest man, maybe a deacon in a church in some peaceful village."

"I thanks yer fer what yer has done fer me, an' I guess I'll be movin', fer I wants ter hurry up an' begin bein' good."

Buffalo Bill smiled.

He understood his man perfectly.

Then he said:

"Well, you can take a pack-horse to carry the things you say are yours, though stolen, and remember if I catch you at your old games again, I'll kill you, or capture you for the hangman."

"Lordy! but you hain't goin' to catch me, an' I bids yer, arter all yer has done fer me, an affectionate adoo."

The man half held out his hand, but did not like the look on Cody's face, withdrew it, and with a bow walked away.

Soon after he rode out of the camp, leading his pack-horse.

Then Buffalo Bill turned to Captain Taylor and said:

"A most thorough scoundrel that, and he'll die by the hangman's hand yet, sir."

"I do not doubt it, Bill; but I have gotten all ready to leave camp in the morning, and you will remain, you say."

"Yes, sir, for I am going to play a lone hand, as there are two trails I wish to follow."

"What two?"

"The one of that escaped captain of the gang, and also of the man I have allowed to go free."

"Why take the latter's, Bill?"

"I have an idea, Captain Taylor, that the two trails will come together after a while."

"You do not trust him, then?"

"He is pushing hard now to get away, ride hard on the trail of Kenton King, and get money from him for saving him from me."

"Doubtless they will join their forces against me."

"Then you must let me give you several men to accompany you, Bill."

"Thank you, no, sir; for a surprise is worth half a dozen men, and these fellows will not trap me."

"That man will think I will mistake the trail he leaves, judging it to be that of Kenton King, his captain's, for several times he told me that he was sure the chief got away with two pack-horses carrying his booty."

"And did he?"

"He was glad to get away with his life, sir, and what booty he had is in the shape of gold and valuables, for he was not the man to hide it away, or to trust them about him."

"I guess you are right, Bill, but I hate to see you go on this trail alone."

"I'm all right, sir; but see, our man is now riding out of camp," and Buffalo Bill pointed to where the outlaw was riding hastily away, leading his pack-horse.

He seemed to be afraid the scout might change his mind and detain him.

"And you wish me to take back with me the body of that poor woman, Bill?"

"Yes, captain, if you will.

"It can be wrapped up securely in the canvas we found here, and strapped on a led horse, for I would like it to be decently buried at the fort, and if you write to her father, he will at once come West, I am sure."

"I will do so, Bill, explaining all, and that you are on the trail of the man who wrecked her life."

"And I will find him, sir, and avenge her," said Cody, sternly.

Soon after he left the outlaw camp on foot, and he took the trail of the outlaw who had departed a short time before.

"I will return by dark, sir," he called out to Captain Taylor.

CHAPTER LV.

ALONE ON THE TRAIL.

The cunning outlaw who had escaped death and with his booty, thanks to Buffalo Bill, was not quite so cute as he thought he was.

With a sincere respect and a wholesome fear of Buffalo Bill, and confident that he was a perfect plainsman, he yet had an idea that he could fool him.

That he did not do so was proven by the fact that the scout left the outlaw camp a quarter of an hour after the man rode away, and left on foot, too.

Buffalo Bill at once took up the trail of the outlaw.

He was anxious to follow it and see just where and how it led, while light still remained to him, so that he would know what to do in the morning when the camp broke up, and he started to track his man.

The nature of the ground around the outlaw camp was such that no tracks were left, even by the shod hoofs.

The outlaw had ridden away in one direction, not in that the chief had taken in his flight, but this did not fool Buffalo Bill, who had gone that way, too.

Half a mile from the retreat he came upon tracks, indistinct but visible to his experienced eye, where horses had been hitched to a tree.

One of the horses had stripped away the bark with his teeth, and it had been done not half an hour before.

The scout stood looking about him.

He picked out a pile of rocks near.

At once he went there. His first find was that of an old canvas bag, evidently just thrown away, as it was useless, not strong enough to hold any weight.

"Ah! As I thought, he came here to get his gold, and my next move is to know if he went on his way to lead an honest life, or took the trail of his chief.

"I believe he did the latter."

So saying, the scout walked back rapidly to where the outlaw had picketed his horses and tried to pick up their trail.

Feeling that he was losing time in a search on that rocky hill summit, he struck off hastily for a certain place, as though he knew just where to go.

It was where the rocky trail began, which led from the valley to the retreat of the outlaws.

He found there just what he had looked for.

There was the heavy trail of the troopers, leading from the valley to the retreat.

But made much later were the tracks of three horses, going in the opposite direction.

One trail was that of a horse going at a run, and it was older than that of the two horses moving at a slow trot.

Buffalo Bill followed the trails only a few hundred yards, when they entered a small stream, went along its bed for a few hundred yards, then reappeared on the opposite bank, and the trails of the three horses went together in the same direction.

"It is as I thought.

"I will take the trail here at dawn," he muttered.

It was growing dark and he retraced his way to the outlaw retreat, over a mile away.

When he entered the trooper's camp, Captain Taylor and the other officers were waiting supper for him.

"Captain Taylor, it was as I thought; the fellow has gone off hot on the trail of his chief, so I have two of them to look after."

"You certainly know just what to do, Bill; but I am glad you found the trail."

"Yes, sir; and my three hours' work to-day saves me that much time to-morrow, for I will be at the spot where I left the trail to go on from there with the first glimpse of dawn."

"And luck to you, but supper is ready, and we'll all turn in early, so as to get a start with you."

Buffalo Bill enjoyed his supper, then had a short talk with the captain, while they smoked their pipes,

and, wrapping himself up in his blanket, was soon fast asleep.

But he called the camp up at early dawn, breakfast was eaten, and the march began before it was light.

"Good-by, Bill, and I predict that you will win out," said the captain, as he grasped the scout's hand.

The other officers also shook hands with him and wished him luck, while the men all gave him a military salute and said good-by.

"Please get the things I promised old Red Panther to the spot in time, captain, for I do not wish to disappoint him," called out Cody.

"I'll see to it, Bill. But when shall we expect you back?"

"When you see me, sir, for life's uncertain," called out the scout, as he rode away in the darkness down the valley.

The troopers, with their pack-horses leading, went on across the stream, hoping to reach the fort with all haste, while Buffalo Bill went to the spot where he had left the trail the night before.

There was just light enough for him to see when he got there, and he at once picked up the tracks and pushed on rapidly.

He was well rested; so was his horse and the pack animal he carried with him, loaded with an extra rifle, revolvers, blankets and provisions.

This left his riding horse with only his own weight to carry.

Once he had struck the trail, Buffalo Bill found that he could follow it without difficulty.

"Now, that fool knew I was to follow the chief's trail, and yet he thought that I would not detect that he had done the same.

"He was most anxious to have me believe the chief carried two pack-horses with him, so, if I saw the trails of three horses, I would not suspect two of them to be his.

"He'll push on as rapidly as he can to overtake the outlaw captain, for my idea is that he is going to strike him for money for telling him that I am after him.

"The fellow wants all he can get, and it may be that he intends to kill and rob him.

"It will only be a case of dog eat dog if he does.

"But the man could only follow the outlaws' trail until dark last night, and begin again to do so this

morning, so he cannot be over half a dozen miles ahead of me.

"And how far ahead of him is the outlaw captain?"

"That is the question.

"If he rode rapidly in his flight, he knew enough to spare his horse when he saw that he was not pursued.

"Then, too, I believe he did not know we knew of his escape, and with one horse he is likely to spare him.

"He must have had a hiding-place for his money, within reaching distance of his retreat, and he stopped to get that, as a matter of course.

"Ah! The trail turns here to yonder rocks, and between here and there no tracks can be seen upon this rocky soil."

Thus mused Buffalo Bill as he rode along.

The scout turned off to the pile of rocks, dismounted and made a close search.

He made a discovery.

It was that he had been right in suspecting that the outlaw captain would stop to pick up his booty.

The rocks were the hiding-place of it, as many traces revealed.

Kenton King had unearthed there his portable booty, and the outlaw on his trail had discovered as much.

Returning to his horse, Buffalo Bill mounted and rode on.

After a mile further, he said:

"Yes, the trail branches off toward Denver.

"Kenton King is going there, as his only safe retreat.

"I must push on."

And Buffalo Bill did so, halting a short half hour at noon for rest and dinner.

In the late afternoon he beheld a horseman far ahead across a level bit of country.

Near to him he saw a horseman with a led horse.

"I have found them," he said.

After a while he added:

"The outlaw is dodging his chief.

"His actions show that he does not ride to come up with him.

"No, he'll get it all by waiting until he camps at dark and creeping up and killing him.

"It is growing interesting, and I'll be on hand, whatever happens," and Buffalo Bill kept the nearest outlaw to him under his eye.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE FUGITIVE OUTLAW.

A horseman was riding slowly over the plains and hills a day after the capture of the Masked Marauder camp, and his face looked haggard and pale.

He was well mounted, but his horse was tired and carried his head low.

"Oh, that I could have gotten to my camp sooner, and escaped from that merciless scout," and the man groaned as he uttered the words.

"I was fortunate to escape with my life, however, but my men were all taken, my booty and horses captured, and I am a wanderer. How hard fortune has gone with me of late, for I meant not to have killed poor Florence.

"I fired to frighten her, and the bullet struck her heart. It was cruel of me to leave her there unburied on the prairie; but then I was mad, and the devil of my nature asserted itself.

"Good God! There is a party of Sioux, and my horse is tired out. All goes against me now, but I will fight them to the death!"

He uttered the words grimly, and started his tired horse into a run, for suddenly over the rise in the timber had appeared a score of Sioux warriors. They quickly discovered him, and gave characteristic wild shouts of triumph.

He started back for the foothills, two miles distant, hoping to reach their shelter and keep the redskins at bay until night, when he could escape on foot.

He had eaten nothing for two days, and utterly worn out; but he was determined to make a bold struggle for life.

On, on he fled, but the Indians were mounted on fresh ponies, their village was not very many miles away, and they rapidly gained upon him. Seeing that they would overtake him, although he had nearly reached the foothills, he turned and stood at bay.

He emptied his rifle, and then took to his revolvers, as they rushed upon him.

A couple of ponies went down under his fire, a

brave fell dead from his saddle, and another was severely wounded, and then they were upon him.

But they did not kill him, as he had expected that they would, but, springing upon him, bore him to the ground and bound him securely.

They knew him and reserved him for torture.

Rejoicing in their capture, yet mourning for their dead and wounded comrades, they started for their village, little dreaming that the eyes of two other men had seen all. It was not a long trail, and the wildest cries of grief and joy mingled went up in the Indian village as the band entered it with their captive.

The outlaw captain, worn out, white faced, yet plucky, was at once tied to a tree and left there alone until the hour of his torture should come.

Suddenly a slender form came along and beheld him. It was the captive white girl of whom Buffalo Bill had told Colonel Royal, for it was the village of the Red Panther.

She stooped as she beheld the white captive, and he started as his eyes fell upon her.

She was very beautiful in face and form, and her great blue eyes stared in wonder as they were turned toward him.

"Who are you?" she asked in a sad tone, in perfect English, spoken in the softest of voices.

"A poor captive, and you also must be one, since you are a white maiden."

"I am a white girl, though half an Indian now, I suppose; but you will be killed."

"Yes, very soon."

"Now, I suppose, for here comes Wolf Fang, the chief next to Red Panther, who is wounded, and his warriors follow him.

"I will try and save you."

"You?"

"Yes, I will do all I can, and I have some power here, and she confronted Wolf Fang as he just then came up, and, seizing his tomahawk from his belt, suddenly cut several of the ropes which bound the prisoner, while she cried:

"Let the Wolf Fang not harm this paleface brave, for he is the brother of Blue Eyes, and will become a brave of our tribe."

The Wolf Fang started back in amazement at her bold act, and said:

"If the Red Panther says the white brave may live and become one of my people, it is right."

"I will ask the Red Panther. Come with me," and she boldly severed the other bonds, and led the captive outlaw to the tepee of the great chief, Red Panther, followed by crowds of redskins, who wondered at her strange and daring act.

But then Blue Eyes was looked upon as a child of the Great Spirit and was acknowledged as the Girl Queen.

Once when a warrior had sought to kill her a stroke of lightning had struck him dead by her side and she had not been harmed.

From that day she was regarded as a superior being.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE TWO WITNESSES.

When the outlaw chief had beheld the band of Sioux bearing down upon him out on the prairie and well knowing his inability to stand them off, had turned to fly, there was one who was on his track and apparently holding back, as though anxious not to be seen by him should he turn and look back over his trail.

That one was the outlaw whom Buffalo Bill had set free.

Mounted on a fresh horse, he could have overtaken the chief hours before had he desired to do so, but he held back for a purpose of his own.

Now, as the fugitive outlaw captain halted at sight of the Indians, the rider dogging his tracks saw them also, and he quickly dodged back to a good cover.

He found it among some rocks well sheltered in a group of dwarf trees.

Had he desired to do so, he could have covered the retreat of the chief and stood off the redskins, perhaps saving the fugitive.

But he concealed his horse well in the group of trees, and himself, too, but took position where he could watch the flight of the chief, and, after the Indians had gone by, could quickly make his escape.

The spot was well off from the trail the pursued and pursuers would take.

The man wore an ugly look upon his face, one of intense disappointment, for if the Indians captured their game, that meant that he would lose it.

He would then not get the booty he had hoped for.

While watching the scene, and when the chief turned and fled, the man in hiding realized that the horse his former chief rode was broken down.

He saw this from the way the animal ran.

It was but a very short while before he knew that the chief could never reach the place where he was hiding.

The Indians were gaining too rapidly.

He knew the chief well and that he was at heart a brave man.

He felt that he would turn at bay and fight when the Indians came too near.

"If he turns now, I'm less likely ter git found out, fer I calculate they will make fer their village ter raise a shindig over ther scalp they gits," he muttered.

And he closely watched the race for life.

The issue came, as has been seen.

He saw the chief turn at bay and fight desperately.

But he saw that they did not take his scalp, but made him a prisoner.

He knew what that meant only too well.

"They is goin' ter burn him, and save ther devil ther expense," he muttered.

Had there been the ghost of a chance, he might have saved the chief, then played his game later to get his money.

But it was a case of twenty to one.

With great anxiety he awaited the result of the capture.

Would the Indians go on to the village, or would they discern the tracks of his two horses, for they were visible at the spot where the fight had taken place?

It was an uneasy wait until he could find out.

But he smiled grimly when the Indians went on with their prisoner, for once too delighted to look for other trails.

But there was another witness of the same scene which the outlaw had been an attentive observer of.

This other observer was back a mile in the rear of the outlaw when the chief had discovered the Indians.

This second witness had seen the chief, and his eye was also upon the outlaw following him.

He had seen the Indians also.

Having a field-glass, he had been able to see more distinctly all that had occurred.

When he discovered the Indians he had at once sought a good place in which to stand at bay.

It was a safe retreat for his horses and himself, and it was off the trail a short distance along which the chief would fly, if he came back that far, and yet it was within easy rifle range.

Having placed his horses securely, this second witness made his way on foot, rifle in hand, to the front.

He saw where the outlaw had taken up his retreat, and he made up his mind to reach it.

The outlaw was too much occupied in what was going on in his front to take any heed to the rear.

He expected no danger from that quarter.

And so the second witness reached the group of rocks and took a position where he could see the man so near him, and also all that took place in the front.

He saw the chief turn to fly, the race for life, and he had his rifle ready, as though to aid the fugitive.

The flying man was a cruel outlaw, but those on his track were redskins who would kill him by the most fearful torture, for their not firing on him showed this.

But the chief turned at bay before he reached the timber, and the end quickly came.

The second witness was Buffalo Bill.

CHAPTER LVIII.

DOUBLY A TRAITOR.

There Buffalo Bill stood behind a rock, peering through the branches of a dwarf tree at the outlaw, and not fifteen feet from him.

The outlaw was talking to himself—a very bad plan.

"Wall, that was a close call fer me, an' I s'pose I sh'udn't kick ef I has lost my boodle.

"But I has lost it, fer thar it goes ter redskins.

"An hour ago, it was as good as mine.

"But I waited too long.

"I sh'ud hev put a bullet inter his heart when he

stopped ter rest his horse back yonder a couple o' miles, fer I cud hev creeped upon him easy then.

"But I were waitin' until I cud git close onder him from ther lay o' ther kentry, and hev ter do no walkin'.

"But it's gone, an' I has got ter make tracks now an' git ter a settlement, fer I has money ter last me a while, an' I hain't no man ter starve when killin' will get me ther boodle.

"I'll go ter other parts, an' whar, ef a suddint death happens, I won't be suspicioned.

"Wall, I'm in luck, while ther cap'n are wuss off than ef Buf'ler Bill had got him.

"An' I'd like ter git a bead on thet same Buf'ler Bill, I would, fer he broke up ther band."

All this Buffalo Bill distinctly heard.

Then the man turned to walk to his horses.

Was he dreaming, or was it Buffalo Bill that he saw?

He looked straight into the muzzle of a revolver not three feet from his face.

He heard the stern order:

"Hands up, quick!"

"Buffalo Bill."

The man almost shrieked the name.

But he obeyed the order. Up went his hands.

Buffalo Bill stepped to his side and removed the revolvers and knife from his belt.

Then he felt for any other weapons that might be concealed about his body.

"So you are the reformed outlaw, the man who was going to be so good?

"You set out upon the trail of your chief, after you just got your money you had hidden, and intended to murder and rob him.

"You thought you would fool me; but I have had to deal with just your kind, so took your trail.

"I saw you hanging back over the trail to get a good place to make the attack, but the Indians foiled you.

"They have taken Kenton King to their village to torture him to death, so I will take you to the fort to

have you hanged, for I will save the lives of others by doing so."

The man's face was white with terror.

It worked convulsively while the scout had spoken.

He thought of all he had to live for, all he had to lose, and, as the scout no longer forced him to hold up his hands, he suddenly made a quick move, a Derringer dropped from his sleeve to his grasp, was thrust forward, and the trigger was pulled.

But the cap snapped.

In an instant he had been felled by a blow of the scout's fist, while his foot was upon him and a revolver leveled.

"Get up!"

The outlaw did so, trembling as though he had a chill.

"You cur! If I were going to the fort I would take you there.

"But I cannot be bothered with a prisoner on the trail I intend to take.

"You are not worthy of any mercy at my hands, but I shall let you go.

"Mount your horse and be gone, and remember, if you are ever seen on this border, after having time to get away, you shall be hanged.

"I mean it."

The scout was justly enraged, as his face showed. The man dropped upon his knees in gratitude, but Buffalo Bill cried:

"Get up!

"You disgrace the attitude of prayer by assuming it.

"Go, and quickly, before I change my mind."

The miserable wretch lost no time in getting away, the scout hanging his weapons upon the pack saddle and keeping him covered until he was some distance off.

Twice the outlaw would have spoken, but he was silenced by an angry word.

Buffalo Bill watched the man and saw him take a trail that would lead him near his horses.

He dodged through the timber, following him.

But he got, as he supposed, out of sight, and then turned in his saddle and shook his fist in a threatening way, back at the scout.

He passed the rocks where the horses were, but did not see them.

The scout followed on foot to note which trail he would take when he reached the base of the foothills.

Upon a higher level the scout could readily watch him, and, seeing him halt, he ran along a spur of the foothills to see the cause.

He at once discerned that there were two Indians in a little valley just going into camp.

The outlaw, having seen them, could readily have avoided them; but he saw the horses, evidently, and wanted them.

So he crept along the hill, after fastening his two animals, and, rifle in hand, made his way to a point where he could get a close and easy shot at the Indians.

To kill one and then the other with his repeating rifle, and without danger to himself, would be what he considered dead easy.

He reached his position, and prepared to fire.

But Buffalo Bill, though a long way off, also decided to risk a shot.

He knew what his rifle would do.

The outlaw was crouching upon a ledge of rock.

The Indians were too busy preparing their supper to keep a close watch.

In fact, they suspected no danger so near their own village.

But there was but one shot.

That one came from Buffalo Bill's rifle.

The Indians heard it, and then saw a man stagger over the ledge and fall into the valley.

It was the outlaw.

Then there came a shout and words in the Sioux tongue.

They saw the scout upon the spur, and, though it was some distance off, they heard his words.

They recognized the great white chief, Pa-e-has-ka.

They had last seen him in their village, and he had been the friend of their wounded chief.

What he said to them they understood, for he told them that a bad paleface had intended to kill them, and he had trailed him and shot him.

He further said that he would join them, as he wished to have them take him to their village.

They listened in wonder, saw him disappear from the spur with a peace sign to them, and soon after he reappeared, mounted and leading a pack-horse.

When he entered the valley he had two other horses with him.

The Indians were scouts, and they had found the horses they had with them, some that had strayed from the outlaw's retreat.

They watched the scout closely, and waited for his coming, prepared for a fight if he should be deceiving them.

But he made peace signs they well understood, talked to them in their own tongue, and they received him in a friendly way.

He told them of the attack of the soldiers upon the outlaws' retreat, the return of the troopers to the fort, the escape of the chief, whom they hated so, and how he had followed, with the capture later of Kenton King.

He also made known all about the outlaw, and how, when he saw him intending to fire upon them, he had taken a long shot at him.

Together they went to the foot of the ledge, where the outlaw had fallen.

The outlaw was dead.

The scout's long shot had been a fatal one.

"He brought it upon himself," said the scout, speaking to himself rather than to the Indians, one of whom lost no time in scalping the outlaw.

"I wish to go with my red brothers to the village of the Red Panther.

"The Pa-e-has-ka wishes to speak with the Evil

Spirit Chief before the Sioux take his life," and Buffalo Bill referred to Kenton King by the name the redskins called him.

Both of the braves were grateful to the scout, and they said that they would take him to see the Red Panther.

Buffalo Bill told them they would first bury the dead outlaw, then camp for the night and start in the early morning.

The scout felt certain that the Sioux who had the outlaw chief a captive would not travel after night-fall, and by rapid riding the next day, they could get to the village soon after the band did.

So the scout got out his provisions for supper, and that night slept within a few feet of his deadliest foes.

But he slept with one eye open.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE VOW KEPT.

Hardly had Blue Eyes and Kenton King reached the *tepee* of the Red Panther, when a great commotion was observed in the village. A stranger had arrived, coming in with two Indian scouts, who had met him miles away. That stranger was a white man, and he rode straight toward the *tepee* of Red Panther.

The Indians recognized him, and fell to one side to let him pass. Suddenly he drew rein before the *tepee* and entered it. It was Buffalo Bill.

"My white brother!" cried Red Panther, holding out his hand at sight of him, for he still lay upon his bed of skins with his wounded leg.

At sight of him, Kenton King gritted his teeth savagely and uttered a curse.

"I have come here to see my brother, the Red Panther, and to ask him to do me a favor," said the scout.

"The Red Panther has no crooked tongue. He

told his white brother that he would be his friend, so what is his wish?"

"You have here some white captives that I would have you give up to me. They are women and children, and if you will let me take them with me, this white man you can keep—aye, and do as you wish with him, for he has a bad heart; he turns against his own people, and I attacked his camp with my braves, and he escaped. I tracked him here to your village."

"Where are your braves?" asked the chief.

"I sent them back to the fort, and came on here alone. I trusted my red brother."

"The white chief is wise, and he is a great brave. He shall have the white captives."

"And this man?" quickly asked Blue Eyes.

"Is just what I said he was—an outlaw, the chief of the outlaw band, known as the Masked Marauders. He won the heart of a beautiful girl—the daughter of my friend, Mr. Duncan Allen—and he has murdered her."

"It is a lie!" shouted the outlaw.

"Did you speak the name of Duncan Allen?" cried Blue Eyes, grasping the scout's hand.

"Yes, the father of the beautiful girl this villain married to destroy."

"Duncan Allen was my father's name, sir, and I had one twin sister, Florence."

"Duncan Allen your father? Then you are Lulu Allen, the daughter he believed to be slain by the Indians?" cried Buffalo Bill, eagerly.

"Yes, I was Lulu Allen, but I am Blue Eyes now."

"Thank God! if your father has lost one child he had found another. Red Panther, you have promised I should have the white captives?" and the scout spoke in the Sioux tongue.

"The Red Panther has spoken."

"So be it; and this man you can keep, for he deserves his fate, be it what it may," was the stern rejoinder.

At the order of Red Panther, the captive outlaw was seized and led away. The two Indian scouts then told Red Panther how Buffalo Bill had saved their lives, and it made the heart of the old chief glad.

A dozen unfortunate captive women and children left the village the next morning, Blue Eyes among them, mounted upon ponies which the Red Panther had given his white brother for them, for the chief was most thankful for all that the Pa-e-has-ka, as the Indians now called Buffalo Bill, had done for him.

As they left the village they saw a crowd of squaws and children gathered around some object at the end of the village. It was the body of Kenton King, the Masked Marauder, who had been tortured to death by the Indians.

That he might not be molested by any of his braves on the warpath, the Red Panther had sent a squad of warriors with the scout, and, leaving them at a point some miles distant from the fort, Buffalo Bill went on with the captives he had saved from a life of imprisonment in an Indian camp, and soon returned with a couple of ponies loaded down with presents for the chief and those who had accompanied him, and which he had purchased of the sutler at the fort, by Colonel Royal and his officers.

It was a joyous feeling for Lulu Allen and the other captives to know that they were safe; and, after a few days' rest at the fort they were sent on under an escort to the nearest point from whence they could start to their homes and friends.

Buffalo Bill, obtaining a leave of absence, escorted her to St. Louis, and restored her to her parents, whose joy at her return could not but be tinged with sorrow at the fate of her unfortunate sister.

After a short stay the gallant Border King returned to the fort.

LOOK AT THIS, BOYS!

19 PRIZES. || ANECDOTE PRIZE CONTEST || 19 PRIZES

WHO HAS HAD THE MOST EXCITING EXPERIENCE?

THAT'S the idea, boys. You have all had some narrow escapes, some dangerous adventures in your lives! Perhaps it was the capsizing of a boat, or the scaling of a cliff, or a close shave in a burning building, or something else equally thrilling.

WRITE IT UP JUST AS IT HAPPENED.

We offer a handsome Prize for the most exciting and best written anecdote sent us by any reader of **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**. The incident, of course, must relate to something that has happened to the writer himself, and it must also be strictly true.

It makes no difference how short the articles are, but no contribution must be longer than 500 words.

HERE ARE THE PRIZES!

TWO FIRST PRIZES.

For Two Most Exciting and Best Written Anecdotes.

Two first-class Spalding Standard Athletic Sweaters. Made of the finest Australian lambs' wool, exceedingly soft. Full fashioned to body and arms, and without seams of any kind. Colors: White Navy Blue, Black and Maroon.

TWO SECOND PRIZES.

For Two Second Best Anecdotes.

Two pairs of Raymond's All Clamp Ball Bearing Roller Skates. Bearings of the finest tempered steel, with 128 steel balls. For speed no skate has ever approached it.

FIVE THIRD PRIZES.

For Five Next Best Anecdotes.

Five pairs of Winslow's Speed Extension Ice Skates, with extension foot plates. These skates have detachable welded steel racing runners, also an extra set of short runners for fancy skating.

FOR NEXT TEN BEST ANECDOTES.

A Spalding 12 inch "Long Distance" Megaphone. Made of fire board, capable of carrying the sound of a human voice one mile, and in some instances, two miles. More fun than a barrel of monkeys.

The contest will continue until Dec. 1st, next.

Send in your anecdotes at once, boys. We are going to publish all of the best ones during the progress of the contest.

We will have to reserve to ourselves the right of judging which anecdote has the most merit, but our readers know that they may depend upon Street & Smith and on their absolute fairness and justice in conducting contests. This one will be no exception to the rule.

REMEMBER!

Whether your contribution wins a prize or not, it stands a good chance of being published together with the name of the writer.

To become a contestant for these prizes, cut out the *Anecdote Contest Coupon*, printed herewith, fill it out properly, and send it to **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**, care of Street & Smith, 238 William St., New York City, together with your anecdote. No anecdote will be considered that does not have this coupon accompanying it.

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PRIZE ANECDOTE DEPARTMENT.

During the progress of the Anecdote Prize Contest this space will be devoted to the publication of the best anecdotes sent in by the contestants.

Here are some of those received this week. They are coming in with a rush, so hurry up, boys, and get yours in early.

Harry's Bird's Nest.

(By James H. Berry, Wilmington, Del.)

Harry and I, somehow or other, always were very good friends, but for all that I can never forget the trick I played upon him.

Harry was very fond of searching for birds' nests, and when he had found one, and the rest of the boys found it out, too, you could see him creep downstairs and steal over to his nest to see whether any one had robbed it or not.

Well, now to come to the trick I played on him.

One day in school Bill Jones, a friend of mine, nodded to me and said he had something to tell me. I wanted him to wait till recess, as it was only ten minutes.

"No," said he, "I want to tell you now."

So I thought I would please him, and I asked the teacher if I could sit with him a little while, in order to show him an example in algebra. He said yes, and so I went over to him.

"Jimmy, you know Harry has been out hunting again this morning, and has found a prize."

"Well, what is it?"

"He found a nest of young robins, and I heard him tell Henry Foster that he was going to take them out to-night after supper. Well, now, I have thought of an idea to catch him."

"Well, let's hear it."

"You know by the pond on the left there are some nettles. We will go over there after school and remove the birds and deposit the nettles in the nest. And when Harry comes for the birds won't he be mad?"

"That's bully!"

So, after school, Bill and I went over to the pond and gathered a few of the nettles, taking very great care not to touch them, however. It did not take us long to do the work, and we returned to the school laughing and talking over the surprise that was in store for Harry.

When supper was over I and a few more boys went over and hid ourselves behind a clump of bushes, and waited to see the fun. It was not long before Harry came along whistling and began to climb the tree.

He put his hand into the nest, and commenced to feel

for the birds, but all at once he gave a yell and down he slid, and made a rush for school, we following close behind.

In the morning he came down with his hand in a sling, and when I asked him what was the matter he said he supposed he had slept in a hornets' nest. All the boys gathered around him and began to tease him, it having leaked out somehow or other that Harry had been robbing a nest during the night.

Harry never went out any more in the night for birds. That gave him a lesson, although Harry never found out who had placed the nettles in the nest.

My Ice-Boat Voyage.

(By Roger Wilson, Portland, Me.)

I was visiting a young lady cousin of mine last winter in a village on the Kennebec River when the following incident occurred:

A young man friend of hers told me if I would go with him he'd give me a sail on an ice-boat.

Cousin Mary said she'd go along, so they hitched two colts onto a cutter, and we started off.

When we got there, or to a tavern close by, the horses were put out and we put in for a hot lemonade and some mince pie, and then, when we were warmed the young man's apprentice came in and told us the ice-boat was all ready.

So we went down to the edge of the lake, and sure enough there it was, head to wind, moored to a stump on shore, with a big mainsail flapping and shivering in the gale. I had never been on an ice-boat before, and I didn't like the looks of it, but when Cousin Mary nestled down on the gratings in the storm I wasn't coward enough to back out, so I stowed myself away in front.

The young man took the tiller, a chap ashore let go the bowline and gave the boat a send off, and away we flew before the wind.

If ever a craft went that ice-boat did. She just flew. But all at once I spied something black ahead. I tried to sing out to the young man, but we were up to it before I could open my mouth, and the next thing I knew I was overboard, going over that ice faster than the

wind, and Cousin Mary right on top of me with both hands grabbing my neck.

After we had slid about a thousand miles more or less, we brought up solid in a drift of snow on the far side of the lake.

I dug out of that as quick as I could, and then I saw the ice-boat on its side, with the young man stuck in the grating by one leg.

Cousin Mary laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks, and said it was so funny.

I felt of a bump on the back of my head as big as a small cocoanut, and asked myself where the "fun" came in for me. I couldn't see it.

I just as lief go out in a sail-boat in any kind of weather, but no more ice-boating for me.

Treed by a Bear.

(Written by Charles H. Graham, Winthrop, Me.)

It was in the month of August, I think, that we were encamped a few miles from Moosehead Lake. There were two besides myself, Luke Martin and Josh Bradley. We had selected a good locality, where we intended to occupy our time in hunting, trapping and fishing.

One morning we determined on a grand hunting excursion through the forest. So, arming ourselves with double-barrel shot guns, pistols and several long hunting knives, and taking a little "grub" in our game bag, sufficient to last us through the day, we locked up our camp and plunged off into the woods in a northerly direction.

After proceeding onward for about a mile, we concluded that it would be better for us to separate; so Josh took a northeasterly course, toward Beaver Pond, and Luke a northwesterly direction, toward Slaty Hill, while I was to keep directly ahead toward Duck Lake, some four or five miles distant, where we agreed to meet each other and see who would have the largest quantity of game.

As I proceeded onward I began to feel discouraged at the poor luck I was having, when suddenly I espied a short distance ahead of me behind a clump of bushes, some eight or ten partridges.

Creeping up behind a fallen tree, of very large dimensions, I leveled my gun, and was just in the act of pulling the trigger, when my attention was arrested by something heavy crashing through the underbrush to my right. The next moment what should I see but a large she bear, followed by two nearly full grown cubs.

My first impulse was to trust to my ability in outrunning my pursuer, and so, if possible, join my companions; but I soon found that that could not be done so easily.

Had I endeavored to proceed I should have been over-

taken in a short time, and would have found Bruin rather a hard customer to encounter alone.

An idea struck me by which I thought I might foil old Bruin. I believed that if I should climb a tree I should be able to get out of her way.

I had but little time to spend in speculation, so throwing down my gun I seized the limb of a huge tree and made my way up its trunk as quickly as possible.

Hardly had I obtained a good foothold on the first limb when old Bruin dashed up to the trunk of the tree uttering fearful growls and evidently enraged at my manoeuvres.

For a moment she paused at the butt of the tree, as if determining which course to take, and then, to my horror, began to ascend upward, uttering savage growls momentarily.

Up, up she clambered, and soon she stood firmly on a large limb not more than six or eight feet below me. I climbed still higher, and so did Bruin.

Soon I found to my chagrin that I could climb no higher, for I had nearly reached the top of the tree and the branches were growing smaller and weaker.

But Bruin still made her way upward, as if bent on capturing me at last.

As if nature placed it there especially to help me out of my trouble, the large limb of another tree interlocked itself with the one on which I was standing; so, quickly taking hold of the limb over my head, to steady myself, I began making my way outward, thinking the bear would not attempt to follow me.

But such was not the case. On reaching the branch in question she hesitated a moment and then commenced pursuing me outward in a cautious manner.

The branch was not very large, and beneath our united weight it began to bend fearfully.

My position had now become extremely hazardous, and my only chance of escape lay in my effort to grasp the limb of the other tree and swing myself from the one on which I was standing.

So, suiting the action to the word, I gave one desperate leap, and fortunately landed safely on a strong branch of the other tree, though not a moment too soon.

Unable to hold up longer under the weight of Bruin and the increased weight produced by my leap to the other tree, the branch gave a loud crack, and, to my amazement and joy, it broke short off within two feet of the body of the tree, and the next minute old Bruin was precipitated full fifty feet to the ground below.

Quickly descending, I found that the bear had been partially stunned by her fall, and wishing to put an end to her on the spot, I drew my knife, and was just on the point of plunging it into her heart, when Josh and Luke broke through the bushes to the left and joined me.

Congratulating me upon my lucky "come off," as they termed it, they set to work to help me dress Bruin; which being done, we took such of her carcass as we wanted, and started for our camp, well pleased with the result of our hunting excursion.

Hunting a Burglar.

(By Max Adler, Detroit, Mich.)

I had a thrilling experience one night recently—at least, it thrilled up and down my spinal marrow and caused my heart to feel seasick.

I was awakened in the middle of the night by a sound as of some one stumbling against a chair in the kitchen.

"Now," I said to myself, "that was certainly a kitchen chair he ran against, and he is waiting to see if he has disturbed any one. He will wait a few minutes, and if I don't move he will. I don't believe father locked the back door when he came to bed, and that's how he got in. His next move will be in this direction, for there is nothing for him to steal out there. I'll be all ready for him when he arrives."

I slowly slid one foot from under the coverlet, and protruded it outward and downward until it touched the floor. Then the other foot noiselessly followed the first. Inch by inch I raised my head, my shoulder, my body, until I sat erect on the side of the bed. But hark! There was a slight noise, as if the burglar was beginning to move. I raised myself as carefully as if I had the rheumatism, and stood erect. A stealthy, sideways step, and my hand encountered the bureau, glided along the polished top to one of the small drawers, drew it out with a very slight grating sound, seized a 42-caliber pistol, drew back the hammer and the burglar was practically a dead man.

He did not come, and I waited until I couldn't wait any longer, and then I struck a match and lighted a lamp. With the light held high above my head in my left hand and the revolver ready cocked in my right hand, I started on a tour of inspection. The first place was the kitchen. No one was there; not even a chair lying upon its back and thrusting its legs into the air. Parlor, dining-room, bedrooms, summer kitchen, wood shed, all were visited, but no burglar could I find.

The next morning I carried my investigation to the cellar, and the mystery was explained. Upon the floor lay my mother's hanging shelf—or fallen hanging shelf—while grouped about it in a most pathetic tableau, was a large and costly assortment of uncanned tomatoes, peaches, pears, plums, grapes and berries, with here and there an untumbled mass of jelly shaking its sides.

An Unexpected Meeting.

(By Walter Holmes, Laramie, Wy.)

I was out with a prospecting party with my father two years ago when I had a startling experience with a bear, and I think the bear was just about as startled as I.

We had been working up against the strong current of the Koowak River all day, and toward nightfall pitched

our tent at the base of a high bluff forming the right bank of the stream.

While supper was being prepared I climbed the bluff to get a look at the country, and was walking leisurely along with my gun carelessly held in my left hand. The top of the bluff was densely covered almost to the edge with spruces and alders, and the undergrowth was so thick that it was impossible to see more than a few feet through it. Ahead of me a cluster of rocks offered a temporary place to sit down and enjoy the view, and I made for it.

Just as I reached the nearest rock a tremendous shaggy animal rose apparently from under my feet, and I immediately recognized in him the brown bear of whose fierceness the natives had been telling us for weeks.

My first instinct was to shoot, and I probably would have done so had my gun been in my right hand; but the first motion I made the bear reared on his haunches and was so formidable-looking that I concluded to wait and see what he intended doing. After a moment's hesitation he dropped on all fours, and with wonderful quickness turned and sprang out of sight in the dense undergrowth.

When I returned to camp and related my experience, Dempsey, our guide, assured me that the bear must have recently concluded a hearty meal, as otherwise he would have most certainly attacked me.

A Dangerous Foe.

(By Charles Warner, Bangor, Me.)

I was out with a camping party three years ago, and we were tramping over the hills in an unsettled region one day when I saw a brown bear about one hundred yards distant, eating berries.

Without a thought of the consequences I raised my gun and fired at the animal. The shot went wide of the mark, but at the report of the gun the bear started for me on the dead run. His charge was met by a shower of bullets from my repeater. Although badly wounded, the infuriated brute did not hesitate an instant, but rushed straight at me.

When within about ten feet of me the bear rose on his haunches and prepared to close. Blood was pouring in streams down his body. One bullet had shattered his upper jaw, but he was still so full of fight that the outcome of the struggle would have been extremely doubtful had not another of the party arrived and ended the fight by shooting the brute through the brain.

An examination of the bear's body showed that it had been struck six times. Three of the shots were in parts of the body ordinarily considered vital, and would doubtless have ultimately caused death, but the vitality of these animals is almost incredible, instances having been cited of their running over one hundred yards after being shot through the heart.

BOYHOODS OF FAMOUS MEN.

This department contains each week the story of the early career of some celebrated American. Watch for these stories and read them, boys. They are of the most fascinating interest.

Those already published are: No. 1.—Buffalo Bill; No. 2.—Kit Carson; No. 3.—Texas Jack.

No. 4.—Col. Daniel Boone.

The immediate ancestors and near relations of the American Boone family, resided at Bradwinch about eight miles from Exeter, England. George Boone, the grandfather of Daniel, emigrated to America and arrived, with Mary, his wife, at Philadelphia, on the 10th of October, 1717. They brought with them eleven children, two daughters and nine sons. The names of three of the sons have come down to us, John, James and Squire. The last of these, Squire Boone, was the father of Daniel.

Daniel Boone was born in Exeter, Pa., February 11, 1735.

Exeter was at this period a small frontier settlement, consisting of log houses, surrounded with woods, which abounded with game of various kinds and were occasionally infested with hostile Indians. It is not surprising that Daniel, passing the period of his boyhood in such a place, should have acquired at an early age the accomplishments of a hunter and woodsman. From a mere child it was his chief delight to roam in the woods, to observe the wild haunts of nature, and to pursue the wild animals which were then so abundant.

They lived in Exeter for ten years; and it was during this time that Daniel began to show his passion for hunting. He was scarcely able to carry a gun when he was shooting all the squirrels, raccoons, and even wild-cats (it is said) that he could find in that region. As he grew older his courage increased, and then we find him amusing himself with higher game. Other lads in the neighborhood were soon taught by him the use of the rifle, and were then able to join him in his adventures.

On one occasion they all started out for a hunt, and, after amusing themselves till it was almost dark, were returning homeward when suddenly a wild cry was heard in the woods. The boys screamed out, "A panther! a panther!" and ran off as fast as they could. Boone stood firmly, looking around for the animal. It was a panther indeed. His eye lighted upon him just in the act of springing toward him; in an instant he leveled his rifle, and shot him through the heart.

But this sort of sport was not enough for him. He seemed resolved to go away from men, and live in the forests with these animals. One morning he started off as usual, with his rifle and dog. Night came on, but Daniel did not return to his home. Another day and night passed away, and still the boy did not make his appearance. His parents were now greatly alarmed. The neighbors joined them in making search for the lad. After wandering about a great while they at length saw smoke rising from a cabin in the distance. Upon reaching it, they found the boy. The floor of the cabin was covered with the skins of such animals as he had slain, and pieces of meat were roasting before the fire for his supper. Here, at a distance of three miles from any settlement, he had built his cabin of sods and branches and sheltered himself in the wilderness.

It was while his father was living on the head waters of the Schuylkill that young Boone received all his education. Short indeed were his schoolboy days. It happened that an Irish schoolmaster strolled into the settlement, and, by the advice of Mr. Boone and other parents, opened a school in the neighborhood. It was not then as it is now. Good school-houses were not scattered over the land; nor were schoolmasters always able to teach their pupils. The school-house where the boys of this settlement went was a log cabin, built in the midst of the woods. The schoolmaster was a strange man; sometimes good-humored, and then indulging the lads; sometimes surly and ill-natured, and then beating them severely.

It was his usual custom, after hearing the first lessons of the morning to allow the children to be out for a half hour at play, during which time he strolled off to refresh himself from his labors. He always walked in the same direction, and the boys thought that after his return, when they were called in, he was generally more cruel than ever. They were whipped more severely, and oftentimes without any cause. They observed this, but did not know the meaning of it.

One morning young Boone asked that he might go out, and had scarcely left the school-room when he saw a

squirrel running over the trunk of a fallen tree. True to his nature, he instantly gave chase, until at last the squirrel darted into a bower of vines and branches. Boone thrust his hand in, and, to his surprise, laid hold of a bottle of whisky.

This was in the direction of his master's morning walks, and he thought now that he understood the secret of such of his ill nature. He returned to the school-room, but, when they were dismissed for that day, he told some of the larger boys of his discovery. Their plan was soon arranged. Early the next morning a bottle of whisky, having tartar emetic in it, was placed in the bower, and the other bottle thrown away. At the usual hour, the lads were sent out to play, and the master started on his walk. But their play was to come afterward; they longed for the master to return. At length they were called in, and in a little time saw the success of their experiment. The master began to look pale and sick, yet still went on with his work. Several boys were called up, one after the other, to recite lessons, and all whipped soundly, whether right or wrong.

At last young Boone was called out to answer questions in arithmetic. He came forward with his slate and pencil, and the master began.

"If you subtract six from nine what remains?" said he.

"Three, sir," said Boone.

"Very good," said the master; "now let us come to fractions. If you take three-quarters from a whole number what remains?"

"The whole, sir," answered Boone.

"You blockhead!" cried the master, beating him; "you stupid little fool, how can you show that?"

"If I take one bottle of whisky," said Boone, "and put in its place another in which I have mixed an emetic, the whole will remain if nobody drinks it!"

The Irishman, dreadfully sick, was now doubly enraged. He seized Boone and commenced beating him; the children shouted and roared; the scuffle continued until Boone knocked the master down upon the floor, and rushed out of the room. It was a day of freedom now for the lads. The story soon ran through the neighborhood; Boone was rebuked by his parents, but the schoolmaster was dismissed, and thus ended the boy's education.

Thus freed from school, he now returned more ardently than ever to his favorite pursuit. His dog and rifle were his constant companions, and day after day he started from home, only to roam through the forests. Hunting seemed to be the only business of his life, and he was never so happy as when at night he came home laden with game. He was an untiring wanderer.

Perhaps it was not a very serious misfortune for

Daniel Boone that his school instruction was so scanty, for in another kind of education not infrequent in the wilds of the West, he was an adept. No Indian could poise the rifle, find his way through the pathless forest, or search out the retreats of game, more readily than Daniel Boone. In all that related to Indian sagacity, border life or the tactics of the skillful hunter, he excelled. The successful training of a hunter, or woodsman, is a kind of education of mental discipline, differing from that of the school-room, but not less effective in giving vigor to the mind, quickness of apprehension, and habits of close observation. Boone was regularly trained in all that made him a successful backwoods man.

In the woods surrounding the little settlement of Exeter, Boone had ample opportunity of gaining that physical training of the limbs and muscles so necessary in the pursuits of the active hunter and pioneer. We have no record of his ever having encountered the Indians during his residence in Pennsylvania. His knowledge of their peculiar modes of hunting and war was to be attained not less thoroughly at a somewhat later period of life.

When Daniel Boone was still a youth, his father emigrated to North Carolina. The precise date of this removal of the family residence is not known. Mr. Peck, an excellent authority, says it took place when Daniel was about eighteen years old. This would make it about the year 1752.

The new residence of Squire Boone, Daniel's father, was near Holman's Ford, on the Yadkin River, about eight miles from Wilkesboro. The fact of the great backwoodsman having passed many years of his life there is still remembered with pride by the inhabitants of that region. The capital of Watauga County which was formed in 1849, is named Boone, in honor of Daniel Boone.

One day he set out with a party of friends, as he expressed it, "in quest of the country of Kentucky." The land at that time belonged to the colony of Virginia.

They arrived there after traversing a wilderness of several hundred miles, and as they passed over the summit of a mountain and stood at the entrance of Kentucky, they beheld a scene of surpassing natural beauty.

On the 22d of December, Boone and John Stuart, one of his companions, left their encampment, and following one of the numerous paths which the buffalo had made through the cane, they plunged boldly into the interior of the forest. They had as yet seen no Indians, and the country had been reported as totally uninhabited. This was true in a strict sense, for although, as we have seen, the Southern and Northwestern tribes were in the habit of hunting here as upon neutral ground, yet not a

single wigwam had been erected, nor did the land bear the slightest mark of having ever been cultivated.

The different tribes would fall in with each other, and from the fierce conflicts which generally followed these casual encounters, the country had been known among them by the name of "the dark and bloody ground!"

The two adventurers soon learned the additional danger to which they were exposed. While roving carelessly from canebrake to canebrake, and admiring the rank growth of vegetation, and the variety of timber which marked the fertility of the soil, they were suddenly alarmed by the appearance of a party of Indians, who, springing from their place of concealment, rushed upon them with a rapidity which rendered escape impossible.

They were almost instantly seized, disarmed and made prisoners. Their feelings may be readily imagined. They were in the hands of an enemy who knew no alternative between adoption and torture; and the numbers and fleetness of their captors rendered escape by open means impossible, while their jealous vigilance seemed equally fatal to any secret attempt.

Boone, however, was possessed of a temper admirably adapted to the circumstances in which he was placed. Of a cold and saturnine, rather than an ardent disposition, he was never either so much elevated by good fortune or depressed by bad, as to lose for an instant the full possession of all his faculties. He saw that immediate escape was impossible, but he encouraged his companion, and constrained himself to accompany the Indians in all their excursions, with so calm and contented an air, that their vigilance insensibly began to relax.

On the seventh evening of their captivity they encamped in a thick canebrake, and having built a large fire, lay down to rest. The party whose duty it was to watch, were weary and negligent, and about midnight Boone, who had not closed an eye, ascertained from the deep breathing all around him, that the whole party, including Stuart, was in a deep sleep.

Gently and gradually extricating himself from the Indians who lay around him, he walked cautiously to the spot where Stuart lay, and having succeeded in awakening him, without alarming the rest, he briefly informed him of his determination, and exhorted him to arise, make no noise, and follow him. Stuart, although ignorant of the design, and suddenly roused from sleep fortunately obeyed with equal silence and celerity, and within a few minutes they were beyond hearing.

Rapidly traversing the forest by the light of the stars and the bark of the trees, they ascertained the direction in which the camp lay, but upon reaching it on the next

day, to their great grief, they found it plundered and deserted, with nothing remaining to show the fate of their companions, and even to the day of his death, Boone knew not whether they had been killed or taken, or had voluntarily abandoned their cabin and returned.

Indeed it has never been ascertained what became of Finley and the rest of Boone's party of hunters.

In the early part of the month of January, Boone and Stuart were agreeably surprised by the arrival of Squire Boone, the younger brother of Daniel, accompanied by another man.

Although Boone returned to North Carolina, he soon returned to Kentucky, determined to settle there.

The further events of his life belong to the period of his manhood, and no more fascinating story can be read than the account of his life in the wilderness of Kentucky. He is generally acknowledged as the founder of that State. His having explored it alone to a considerable extent; his leading the earliest bands of settlers, his founding of Boonesborough, the nucleus of the future State, his having defended this and other stations successfully against the attack of the Indians, and the prominent part which he took in military affairs at this period of distress and peril, certainly render his claims to the distinguished honor of founding Kentucky very strong.

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